

Two years ago, we set upon a course that the people of our community requested. A course of transforming a 367 year old form of government steeped in history, into a new organization of operations that would be more adaptable in these changing times. We were – and still are – entrusted with offering proper direction for our town understanding that quick action or unwise decisions would jeopardize our efforts to make Braintree the jewel of the South Shore. We heeded a daily reminder – too often not understood – that the “nowness” of today is often not in the best interest of tomorrow.

We have taken the corrective steps over the past two years in reducing the size of our government and in doing so, we have lived within our means during a very challenging and unprecedented economic period in our nation’s history.

We have reorganized our government and appointed new people to important positions which have helped create a team effort in moving our new government forward.

Over these past two years, we have worked hard to make our town a welcoming community.

We have built a level of civic pride and community events that invite people to be part of the whole. Restoring our Town Hall and the Town Hall Mall area, the Beautify Braintree Days, Farmer's Market, July 4<sup>th</sup> Parade, summer Family Movie Nights at Braintree High, and our support of the Braintree Historical Society and our Thayer Public Library events have all seen great citizen participation.

We have been focused, we have been diligent, and we have been steady in our daily work to position Braintree for a strong future.

Our work continues today and in the days ahead.

- Maintaining our financial footing with the knowledge that the economy continues to remain flat and that additional state assistance – reduced over the past two years – will not be forthcoming.
- Continuing our focus on improving the quality of life in our town through good schools and attention to public safety operations in our police and fire departments.

- Fixing our existing parks like we have accomplished at Dyer Hill and at Mattalina, finding a resolution on Petersen Pool, establishing a dog park, and planning our future with our 100 Roads Program, planting of 250 plus trees, and with special attention this year given to the Old Thayer Library Building, making that magnificent building majestic once again.

- Continuing to think regionally as we have done with our curbside trash / recycling initiatives with Weymouth and Quincy. We will work with Weymouth in the year ahead to see that the East Braintree / Weymouth Landing area gets the improvements that it deserves. And we will continue our efforts with our neighboring towns of Holbrook and Randolph to build a new Tri-Town Regional Water Treatment Facility to service our combined population of over 80,000 people.

- We will continue to implement technology and training for all our town employees so that we can better manage the \$100 million operation that is Braintree Town Government. We shall also continue to be fair in our negotiations with our town employees. To date, we have finalized many of our collective bargaining agreements that properly recognize the value of employees within the financial backdrop of our current economic times.

There are other tasks as well. The daily tasks of snow removal, fixing potholes, and responding to citizens' concerns – all in an effort of moving our town forward in way that we can all be proud of.

As we pause at this two year milestone, I acknowledge that the work we are doing is not without risk. It is not easy to administratively change the way in which we must operate. The old way of doing things is hard to let go of and the introduction of new ideas is not easily accepted. Yet accept we must.

I recognize that there are still some people who did not want to change our form of government. Some who still harken back to the yesteryear as a better place. I appreciate the sentimental journey. The reality is that we have made great strides in the implementation of our new government.



Dr. Norman Vincent Peale wrote that if you think in negative terms you will get negative results. If you think in positive terms, you will achieve positive results.

This is a simple truth.

And as Braintree native John Adams famously remarked, ‘facts are stubborn things.’

The fact is that Braintree is more financially sound, operationally tighter, and better managed than in its past – and we are better equipped to handle the unforeseeable because of the centralized structure of our new government and the strength of our resolve to get it right for the long term and to not short cut our future for a quick present term gain.

Finally, the close of one year and the start of another allows for reflection, renewal, and resolutions.

So on all three I will offer a thought:

1. On reflection, I believe we are better than we were, but with much more to accomplish.
2. On renewal, I recommit to work hard every day with you, and all the elected officials, appointed individuals, and our townspeople to make Braintree the premier municipality in our Commonwealth.

3. Our resolution for Braintree in 2010 – our collective resolve should be for us and will be for me to make Braintree a perfect 10 in 2010!

At this midpoint of our four year assignment, we can rightfully be optimistic for the next two years. With continued energy, effort, and excitement, I look forward to working with the Town Council and all our citizens to see that the future is boundless for Braintree!